

COUNTRY DATA: GUINEA : Information from the CIA World Factbook

INTRODUCTION

Guinea has had a history of authoritarian rule since gaining its independence from France in 1958. Lansana CONTE came to power in 1984 when the military seized the government after the death of the first president, Sekou TOURE. Guinea did not hold democratic elections until 1993 when Gen. CONTE (head of the military government) was elected president of the civilian government. He was reelected in 1998 and again in 2003, though all the polls were marred by irregularities. History repeated itself in December 2008 when following President CONTE's death, Capt. Moussa Dadis CAMARA led a military coup, seizing power and suspending the constitution. His unwillingness to yield to domestic and international pressure to step down led to heightened political tensions that culminated in September 2009 when presidential guards opened fire on an opposition rally killing more than 150 people, and in early December 2009 when CAMARA was wounded in an assassination attempt and evacuated to Morocco and subsequently to Burkina Faso. A transitional government led by General Sekouba KONATE held democratic elections in 2010 and Alpha CONDE was elected president in the country's first free and fair elections since independence.

GEOGRAPHY

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| Location | Western Africa, bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, between Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone |
| Area | 245,857 sq km |
| Climate | generally hot and humid; monsoonal-type rainy season (June to November) with southwesterly winds; dry season (December to May) with northeasterly harmattan winds |
| Natural Resources | bauxite, iron ore, diamonds, gold, uranium, hydropower, fish, salt |
| Total Renewable Water Resources | 226 cu km (1987) |
| Freshwater Withdrawal | 1.51 cu km/yr (domestic 8%; industrial 2%; agricultural 90%) |
| Natural Hazards | hot, dry, dusty harmattan haze may reduce visibility during dry season |
| Environmental Issues | deforestation; inadequate supplies of potable water; desertification; soil contamination and erosion; overfishing, overpopulation in forest region; poor mining practices have led to environmental damage |

PEOPLE

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| Population | 10,324,025 (July 2010 est.) |
| Ethnic Groups | Peuhl 40%, Malinke 30%, Soussou 20%, smaller ethnic groups 10% |

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| Religions | Muslim 85%, Christian 8%, indigenous beliefs 7% |
| Languages | French (official); note - each ethnic group has its own language |
| Literacy Rate | 29.5% (age 15 and over) male: 42.6%; female: 18.1% (2003 est.) |
| Major Infectious Diseases | degree of risk: high food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever; vectorborne disease: malaria and yellow fever; water contact disease: schistosomiasis; animal disease: rabies; aerosolized dust or soil contact disease: Lassa fever (2009) HIV/AIDS: adult prevalence rate: 1.6 % (2007 est.); 87,000 people living with HIV/AIDS; 4,500 people died |
| GOVERNMENT | |
| Type | republic |
| Independence | 2 October 1958 (from France) |
| Constitution | 23 December 1990 (Loi Fundamentale) |
| Legal System | based on French civil law system, customary law, and decree; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations |
| ECONOMY | |
| Agricultural Products | rice, coffee, pineapples, palm kernels, cassava (tapioca), bananas, sweet potatoes; cattle, sheep, goats; timber |
| Industries | bauxite, gold, diamonds, iron; alumina refining; light manufacturing, and agricultural processing |
| Import commodities | petroleum products, metals, machinery, transport equipment, textiles, grain and other foodstuffs |
| Import Partners | China 8.67%, Netherlands 6.67%, France 4.33%, UK 4.22% (2009) |
| Export Commodities | bauxite, alumina, gold, diamonds, coffee, fish, agricultural products |
| Export Partners | India 19.68%, Spain 13.18%, Russia 7.24%, Germany 6.86%, Ireland 5.87%, US 5.71%, Ukraine 5.6% (2009) |
| Per Capita GDP | \$1,000 (2010 est.) |
| Population below poverty line | 47% (2006 est.) |

*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.